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United Nations

Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

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Supplement No. 35 (A/60/35)

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Letter of transmittal

5 October 2005

Mr. Secretary-General,

I have the honour to enclose herewith the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for submission to the General Assembly in accordance with paragraph 7 of its resolution 59/28 of 1 December 2004.

The report covers the period from 7 October 2004 to 5 October 2005.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(*Signed*) Paul **Badji**
Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the
Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

His Excellency
Mr. Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York

Chapter I
Introduction

1. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was established by the General Assembly by resolution 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975, with the task of recommending a programme designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights as recognized by the Assembly in its resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974.

2. The recommendations made by the Committee in its first report to the General Assembly[1] were endorsed by the Assembly as a basis for the solution of the question of Palestine. In its subsequent reports,[2] the Committee has continued to stress that a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, must be based on the relevant United Nations resolutions and the following essential principles: the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, and from the other occupied Arab territories; respect for the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized boundaries; and the recognition and exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination. The recommendations of the Committee contained in its first report could not be implemented, and the Assembly each year renewed the Committee's mandate and requested it to intensify efforts in pursuit of its objectives.

3. The Committee strongly supported the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side within secure and recognized borders on the basis of the 1949 armistice lines, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003). The Committee welcomed and supported the Quartet's road map and called on the parties to implement it. At the same time, the Committee continued to work towards promoting the full realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and to its own independent State, on all Palestinian territory occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem. The Committee also continued to mobilize international assistance for and in solidarity with the Palestinian people.

4. The passing in November 2004 of the Palestinian Authority President and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Yasser Arafat, represented a real challenge to the Palestinian people and institutions. However, the Palestinian people and institutions succeeded in achieving a peaceful, democratic and responsible transition. President Mahmoud Abbas was elected as the new Palestinian Authority President in fair and free elections, which were internationally monitored.

5. With the assistance of the international community, especially Egypt, the first summit meeting in years was held in Sharm el-Sheikh between the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, and Palestinian Authority President Abbas. The commitments declared by the parties, in particular as regards the cessation of all acts of violence, the return to Palestinian Authority control of five Palestinian cities in the West Bank and the release of a number of Palestinian prisoners created a new momentum towards the resumption of the peace process. However, continued Israeli raids into Palestinian population centres, combined with extrajudicial killings, house demolitions, arrests and acts of violence and counter-violence, including three suicide bombings, severely diminished hopes of progress in implementing the Sharm el-Sheikh understandings and the road map.

6. The removal of all Israeli settlements from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank and the withdrawal of the Israeli army from the Gaza Strip were the most significant political developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict of recent years. The pull-out, carried out by the Israeli Government in a swift and determined manner, was completed on 12 September 2005. The Committee recognized the Palestinian Authority's determined efforts to coordinate the pull-out with the Israeli side so that it would be carried out in a calm and peaceful manner. That contributed to a resumption of security coordination between the parties, an experience that should be built upon and widened. The international community, including the Quartet, considered the dismantling of settlements and the pull-out an important step towards achieving the vision of two democratic States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. The Quartet declared its readiness to support efforts by the Palestinian Authority in rehabilitating the Gaza economy and to create hope and confidence for the Palestinian people.

7. In the course of the year, the Committee remained deeply concerned about the intensified expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the acceleration in the completion of the illegal wall built in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. New facts on the ground were accompanied by alarming reports of plans for intensified construction in West Bank settlements, including in and around East Jerusalem, in contravention of Israel's obligations under the road map and in violation of international law and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, threatening to upset the positive momentum of the Gaza withdrawal and the understandings reached at Sharm el-Sheikh. The Committee reminded Israel, the occupying Power, that its settlement activities, the annexation of East Jerusalem, any actions to strengthen its hold on the city and the construction of the wall on occupied land were contrary to international law. It called upon all Governments to fulfil their obligations under international law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention, and to take the necessary steps to ensure that Israel complied with its international obligations. The Committee was alarmed by public pronouncements by Israeli officials in September 2005 concerning the future of Jerusalem and borders, the two issues that were to be resolved in the course of the permanent status negotiations between the parties. It viewed such statements as counterproductive, unhelpful and as ones that would predetermine the outcome of the permanent status talks.

8. The Committee was encouraged by the efforts of the Quartet aimed at helping the parties to move towards the implementation of the road map. The Quartet met regularly to help the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority to take specific steps required under the road map, which provided for the way to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003), and the principle of a permanent two-State solution to the conflict, based on 1967 borders, the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the right of all States to live in peace and security.

9. The Committee noted the serious efforts by the Palestinian Authority, President Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian leadership to end violence, strengthen the national unity of the Palestinian people and achieve a solution of the question of Palestine through exclusively peaceful means. The Committee called upon the international community to extend all possible cooperation to the Palestinian leadership in its quest for the realization of the inalienable rights of its people.

Chapter II
Mandate of the Committee

10. On 1 December 2004, the General Assembly renewed the mandate of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (resolution 59/28), requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Division for Palestinian Rights of the United Nations Secretariat with the necessary resources to carry out its programme of work (resolution 59/29), and requested the continuation of the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information (resolution 59/30). On the same date, the Assembly adopted resolution 59/31 entitled "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine".

Chapter III
Organization of work

A. Membership and officers

11. The Committee is composed of the following Member States: Afghanistan, Belarus, Cuba, Cyprus, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tunisia, Turkey and Ukraine.

12. In a letter dated 31 May 2005, the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations informed the Chairman of the Committee of the decision of his Government to discontinue its membership of the Committee. The Committee took note of the decision at its 286th meeting on 21 June 2004. In a letter, the Chairman informed the President of the General Assembly of the decision of the Government of Romania. The letter from the Chairman and its annex were circulated in document A/59/891 of the General Assembly.

13. At its 284th meeting, on 7 February 2005, the Committee re-elected Paul Badji (Senegal) as Chairman, Orlando Requeijo Gual (Cuba) as Vice-Chairman, Ravan A. G. Farhâdi (Afghanistan) as Vice-Chairman and Victor Camilleri (Malta) as Rapporteur.

14. At its 284th meeting, the Committee adopted its programme of work for 2005.[3]

B. Participation in the work of the Committee

15. As in previous years, the Committee reconfirmed that all United Nations Member States and observers wishing to participate in the work of the Committee as observers were welcome to do so. In accordance with established practice, Palestine participated in the work of the Committee as an observer, attended all of its meetings and made observations and proposals for consideration by the Committee and its Bureau.

16. In 2005, the Committee again welcomed as observers all States and organizations that had participated in its work in the preceding year.[4]

Chapter IV

Review of the situation relating to the question of Palestine

17. In pursuance of its mandate, the Committee continued to monitor the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as relevant political developments. The passing of Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat on 11 November 2004 marked the end of a historic and remarkable leadership for the Palestinian people. After a period of mourning, the Palestinian people organized presidential elections that brought Mahmoud Abbas to office in a vote that was reported to have been conducted in a fair, free and peaceful atmosphere. A total of 775,146 Palestinians cast their votes in the poll held on 9 January 2005. Some 800 international observers and 7,000 national observers monitored the election process and declared it free and fair. On 15 January, Mr. Abbas was sworn in as the new President of the Palestinian Authority. Palestinian voters in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip took part in the first-ever municipal elections, the first of which were held in December 2004. In August 2005, President Abbas decreed that legislative elections would be held on 25 January 2006.

18. During the period under review, the Committee closely monitored the situation on the ground and was concerned by the continuing violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Casualties continued to mount, mostly among Palestinians, as a result of the use of excessive force by the occupying Power, but also among Israeli civilians in Israel from actions by Palestinian militants, including suicide bombers. In October 2004, a major Israeli military operation in the Gaza Strip resulted in the death of a large number of Palestinians. Many of the victims were civilians, a number of whom were children. By 15 October, 135 Palestinians had been killed in the Gaza Strip, at least 34 of them children. Four Palestinian children were killed as a result of Israeli military fire on schools of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). At the end of 2004 and in early 2005, repeated Israeli incursions into the Gaza Strip caused the number of Palestinian fatalities to rise. By February, the number of violent acts had dropped as a result of an informal ceasefire agreed and adhered to by various Palestinian organizations. By mid-2005, the ceasefire had eroded owing to continual Israeli incursions into Palestinian cities and refugee camps, resulting in the killing and arrest of Palestinian militants. Rocket and mortar attacks by Palestinian militants had intensified. Suicide bombings on 25 February in Tel Aviv, 12 July in Netanya and 28 August in Beersheba killed at least 10 Israeli civilians. Israel resumed its practice of extrajudicial executions, killing seven Hamas militants on 15 July. Shortly after the Israeli withdrawal in September, there was a worrying upsurge of violence in the Gaza Strip. Qassam rocket attacks intensified and Israel conducted missile strikes in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli army also conducted large-scale search and arrest operations in the West Bank. The Committee has repeatedly condemned the policy and practice of extrajudicial executions as being inadmissible under international humanitarian law. At the same time, it has strongly condemned all terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians in Israel, which cannot be justified and undermined any prospect of reconciliation between the two parties. Close to 4,000 Palestinians have been killed and 40,000 wounded since the start of the intifada. The growing number of children directly harmed by the violence has been especially worrying. The number of deaths of children under 18 exceeded 720.

19. The Committee was greatly concerned by the fact that housing demolitions had continued during the year, particularly in East Jerusalem. By the end of 2004, 152 buildings had been demolished in East Jerusalem and 39 houses in Khan Yunis. By February 2005, an additional 10 buildings had been demolished in East Jerusalem, including a seven-storey building, while another 2,000 demolition orders were outstanding. UNRWA reported that, over the past four years, some 2,990 homes in the Gaza Strip alone had been destroyed or damaged beyond repair by the Israeli army, leaving some 28,483 people homeless. Over 4,000 Palestinian homes have been destroyed since the beginning of the current intifada.

20. Over the course of 2005, the international community continued its efforts to revitalize the peace process. Sponsored by Egypt, the Sharm el-Sheikh summit was held on 8 February between Prime Minister Sharon and President Abbas. The main outcome of the summit was the parties' commitment to cease all acts of violence. Messrs. Abbas and Sharon discussed a number of other important issues related to overcoming the confrontation and resuming a dialogue based on the fulfilment by both sides of their obligations under the road map. It was agreed that negotiating contacts between the Israelis and Palestinians would continue. The parties also agreed on further confidence-building measures. Israel announced that it would release 900 prisoners (see para. 27), withdraw its troops from five West Bank cities within three weeks and stop the arrest and assassination of Palestinian militants if the latter agreed to lay down their arms. On 12 February, President Abbas met in Cairo with the leaders of various Palestinian organizations to secure a temporary informal ceasefire. The factions agreed to adhere to a period of calm on the condition that Israel fulfilled its own commitments. The implementation of the Sharm el-Sheikh understandings was slow and incomplete. Five hundred Palestinian prisoners were released on 21 February, and another 398 on 2 June. In March, Israel handed back security control over Jericho and Tulkarm to the Palestinian Authority, while the withdrawal from the other three cities (Qalqilya, Bethlehem and Ramallah) to be handed back to Palestinian Authority control was yet to take place. By early May, the Palestinian Authority had reported 4,200 Israeli violations of the Sharm el-Sheikh understandings, including 1,230 incursions into Palestinian cities and villages, causing the death of 20 Palestinians, the wounding of 290 others and the arrest of more than 600. At the same time, Qassam rocket and mortar shelling of Israeli targets by Palestinian militants continued.

21. On 20 February, the Israeli Cabinet approved the evacuation of settlements under the unilateral disengagement initiative announced one year earlier. In August, all 21 settlements in the Gaza Strip and four settlements in the northern West Bank were evacuated and dismantled. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the operation, conducted by the Israeli military with the limited coordination of the Palestinian Authority, had proceeded smoothly and had been completed ahead of schedule. The evacuation of approximately 8,500 Gaza Strip and West Bank settlers had been completed by 23 August; the Israeli military withdrew from the Gaza Strip on 12 September and from the four West Bank settlements on 20 September. The Committee viewed the pull-out as a promising step that could revive negotiations within the framework of the road map aimed at the emergence of an independent, unified and territorially contiguous Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbours. The Committee emphasized that the withdrawal should be complete and irreversible and be followed by firm action to complete the implementation of the Sharm el-Sheikh understandings, including the

withdrawal from cities in the West Bank, the release of more prisoners and the cessation of all acts of violence. The Committee also considered that an early agreement was needed on a number of urgent actions (including the removal of the huge amount of rubble left after the pull-out) that would allow the Palestinian Authority to exercise control over its borders, crossing points, territorial sea and airspace and the establishment of a permanent and direct link to the West Bank. These actions are absolutely vital for the Palestinian economy (see para. 40).

22. The Committee welcomed the initiative by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to convene, on 1 March 2005, the London meeting on supporting the Palestinian Authority, which led to a strengthening of international commitments in support of the plans of the Palestinian Authority for institutional renewal. On 14 April, the Quartet appointed the former World Bank President, James Wolfensohn, as special envoy to coordinate the support of the international community for the Gaza withdrawal plan. His priority was to set up a quick-impact programme aimed at bringing about tangible economic change for the Palestinian people.

23. Since January 2005, the newly appointed Palestinian Cabinet has taken specific steps as part of the comprehensive reform of the security services and consolidated various Palestinian security services into three agencies under the authority of the Minister of the Interior. However, Palestinian security services lacked equipment, ammunition and adequate means of communication. Another problem was the methodical destruction, since September 2000, of the Palestinian security apparatus by the Israeli army and security services. While the Palestinian Authority has shown resolve in fulfilling its obligations under the road map, it has nevertheless faced a number of serious challenges in its efforts to introduce comprehensive security reform. The Committee welcomed the important contribution to security reform by Egypt and the members of the Quartet.

24. During the period under review, the Committee noted that, in defiance of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and the position of the international community, Israel continued the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. On 20 February, the Israeli High Court of Justice amended the route of the wall to bring it closer to the Green Line, though a large area of Palestinian land was still included. In the Jerusalem area, the route remained the same, with an addition of 40 kilometres that would surround the "Ma'ale Adumim" settlement and the nearby settlements of "Kfar Adumim", "Antut", "Nofei Prat" and "Kedar". The wall, when completed, would place "Ma'ale Adumim", its industrial zone, Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem and most of East Jerusalem on the Israeli side. It would cut 25 kilometres into Occupied Palestinian Territory, separating the northern and southern parts of the West Bank. A new road being planned to connect Ramallah, north of Jerusalem, with Bethlehem in the south would still deny access for Palestinians to East Jerusalem, because the road would bypass the city. Some 60,000 Palestinians with Jerusalem identity documents would be on the east side of the wall, while incorporating some 30,000 "Ma'ale Adumim" settlers into Jerusalem. Checkpoints along the wall would regulate the movement of Palestinians to and from East Jerusalem and would likely lead to a further reduction in the number of Palestinians entering Jerusalem. To the south of Jerusalem, the new route put the "Gush Etzion" settlement block on the Israeli side, surrounding four Palestinian villages with some 18,000 residents, plus a sizeable amount of Palestinian agricultural land. On 16 May, the High Court rescinded temporary

injunctions on the construction of the wall around "Ariel". With the addition of the so-called "Ariel Loop", the wall would cut more than 20 kilometres deep into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, annexing "Ariel" and other smaller settlements to Israel, together with over 6,243 acres of Palestinian land. On 15 September, in his address to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, Prime Minister Sharon pledged to continue building the wall until it was completed, stating that it was indispensable for the security of Israel. The Committee reiterated its concern that, apart from considerably hampering Palestinian economic development and worsening the humanitarian situation, the decision to proceed with the construction was an attempt to unilaterally define the borders of the future Palestinian State. In the view of the Committee, that decision would prejudice the outcome of final status negotiations. On 21 August, Israeli troops started handing military orders to Palestinians to confiscate some 67 square kilometres of Palestinian land in addition to 396 acres of privately owned Palestinian land in Al-Azzariyeh, Abu Dis and Sawahra al-Sharkiyeh, which had been confiscated to build the wall. As requested by the General Assembly in its resolution ES-10/15 on the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, the Secretary-General was in the process of administrative and budgetary preparations to establish the register of damage caused by the building of the wall. The Committee believed that it was imperative that the Secretary-General expedite the establishment of the said register and begin the important work in this regard. Pursuant to the same resolution, Switzerland issued a report based on consultations with all the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention. The Committee expressed the hope that proposals raised in the report would help efforts to uphold international law.

25. The Committee noted that settlement construction and expansion in the West Bank continued apace. The Israeli Prime Minister's plan (the "E-1 plan") to enlarge settlements in the West Bank would be, if implemented, the largest expansion project ever witnessed and would confiscate an area larger than the Gaza Strip. The aim of the E-1 plan was to link "Ma'ale Adumim" to Jerusalem. Approved by the Israeli Civil Administration in February, it would include the construction of 3,500 dwelling units, hotels and commercial facilities. According to the Israeli Civil Administration, the construction of a new police headquarters in the E-1 area was also authorized. With the expansion, the radius of "Ma'ale Adumim" would double that of Tel Aviv. Overall, Israel planned to build no less than 4,891 new housing units in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 2005, not including the 1,500 housing units for the Jahalin tribe to be relocated from the area near "Ma'ale Adumim", which would bring the total to 6,391 units. Though the Israeli Government decided to freeze the E-1 plan, it reiterated its intention to build in that area in due course, in violation of the road map. The Committee was worried that the separation of the north from the south of the West Bank would lead to the expansion of "Ma'ale Adumim", while planned construction in the E-1 area, being contrary to international law, would render the main objective of the road map meaningless. Three settlements — "Beitar Illit" west of Bethlehem, "Tal Zion" near Ramallah and "Modi'in Illit" west of Ramallah — were the fastest growing in the West Bank. New construction was planned for the settlements of "Modi'in Illit" (1,500 housing units), "Beitar Illit" (500), "Har Gilo" (35), "Giv'at Ze'ev" (132), "Geva Binyamin" (200), "Etz Efraim" (240), "Elkana" (90) and "Alon Shvut" (24). The "Tzufim" settlement would receive another 1,500 housing units. The Israel Lands Administration issued a tender on 1 April for the construction of 40 dwelling units at "Har Homa". In July, the Israeli local planning committee of the Jerusalem

municipality approved the construction of a new settlement in the Muslim quarter of Jerusalem's Old City, while the Knesset approved assistance for the improvement of the infrastructure of and agriculture in Jordan Valley settlements. In a letter to the Secretary-General, the Committee expressed serious concerns over Israel's decision to expand and consolidate its settlements in the West Bank (see para. 38).

26. In March, a report submitted by former Israeli State Prosecutor Talia Sasson to the Israeli Prime Minister indicated that the Housing and Construction Ministry had been actively involved in setting up outposts, supplying more than 400 mobile homes for them. As at June 2005, there were 101 outposts in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 51 of them built after February 2001. The population of West Bank settlements grew by 12,800 people over the past year, bringing the total to 246,000, not including East Jerusalem. Verbal and physical harassment by settlers of Palestinians have become more vicious, especially in the run-up to the removal of settlements and Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. Attacks have included shooting at the tyres of ambulances transporting injured Palestinians, damaging olive harvests of Palestinian farmers, poisoning their sheep and other animals, contaminating Palestinian fields in the Hebron area with poison and setting fire to acres of cultivated land. In the West Bank settlement of "Shiloh", a settler fired at a group of Palestinians, killing four and wounding two others.

27. A report issued by the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Detainees and Ex-Prisoners Affairs in March 2005 stated that a total of 35,000 Palestinian arrests had been made by Israel since September 2000. Four hundred prisoners sentenced before the Oslo Peace Accords remained in prison, despite the call by the Accords for their release. By March 2005, Israeli forces had arrested and imprisoned 128 women, 20 of whom were mothers and 2 of whom gave birth while in prison. Female prisoners faced torture, humiliation and harsh prison conditions. As at April, 312 Palestinian children were in Israeli custody. As at September, there were seven girls under the age of 18 in Israeli detention, in addition to the number of women who had turned 18 while under imprisonment. Of the child prisoners, 174 were still awaiting trial and 124 had been tried and sentenced. More than 450 Palestinian prisoners were arrested when they were children but reached the age of 18 while in prison, where most of them remain. Some 55 per cent of child prisoners were arrested for throwing stones at Israeli soldiers. Israel released 159 prisoners on 27 December 2004. Pursuant to the understandings reached at Sharm el-Sheikh, Israel has released close to 900 prisoners in 2005. However, Palestinians complained that the majority of those released were administrative detainees or prisoners who were already due to be released. Furthermore, the release was not coordinated with the Palestinian Authority through a joint committee, as agreed at Sharm el-Sheikh. It also did not address the urgency of releasing prisoners who were ill, elderly or child prisoners. As at September, over 8,000 Palestinians remained in Israeli detention facilities distributed among 20 Israeli prisons and interrogation centres.

28. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the living conditions of workers and their families in the Occupied Palestinian Territory continued to be extremely hard. While domestic output had grown in 2004 following four years of recession in the Palestinian economy, there was little improvement in the dire Palestinian economic situation in the period under review. ILO reported that fewer than half of all men of working age and only 10 per cent of women of working age were employed. Youth unemployment was particularly high (40 per cent) among 15- to 24-year-olds. ILO called for a rapid lifting of closures,

better access to the Israeli labour market and improved trade facilities. Most movement restrictions for Palestinians remained in place, despite some initial measures taken by Israel. Checkpoints, curfews and the permit system continued to have an impact on the humanitarian operations. The Israel disengagement plan, aimed at reducing the number of Palestinian workers in Israel to zero by 2008, could severely restrict income opportunities and the prospects of poverty alleviation. Already, 77.3 per cent of Palestinians (more than 1 million people) in the Gaza Strip live below the poverty line, with more than 300,000 of them in "deep poverty" (i.e. barely surviving). Restriction of movement of Palestinian workers through closures, including the wall, has thrown some 150,000 of them into unemployment since September 2000. The Palestinian Authority's gross national product was $3.7 billion in 2004, a slight increase on the $3.6 billion in 2003, though below the pre-2000 figure estimated at $5.0 billion.

29. The Committee expressed its grave concern at the deterioration of the health and nutritional status of the Palestinian population, particularly women and children. Since 2000, over 60 Palestinian women have given birth at Israeli checkpoints owing to delays in checkpoint procedures; 36 babies have died as a result. Studies revealed that anaemia rates in the Gaza Strip were as high as 54.7 per cent among children, 35.7 per cent among pregnant women and 45.7 per cent among nursing mothers. Years of chronic insecurity and violence have had a deep psychological impact on the population. Almost 50 per cent of children have experienced conflict-related violence or witnessed violent acts affecting immediate family members, generating high rates of psychological problems among children. Some 36 per cent of parents reported aggressive behaviour among their children, 31 per cent noticed bad school results and 28 per cent reported that their children had nightmares.

30. Palestinian towns and villages faced severe problems with the water supply. The shortage of water in the Gaza Strip has increased its price to five times that in Israel. Israeli army incursions have seriously damaged water, sewage and power networks. Physical damage from Israeli military actions to the Occupied Palestinian Territory's water and waste-water sector was estimated at about $140 million by the end of 2004. With the construction of the wall, Israel would effectively annex most of the western aquifer system, which provided 51 per cent of West Bank water resources. On 3 May, a settler from "Kedumim" chemically contaminated agricultural wells belonging to Palestinian farmers from Qalqilya.

31. UNRWA continued to provide education, health care, social services, microcredit and relief assistance to 4.2 million Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It also continued to address the worst effects of the conflict in the Occupied Palestinian Territory on refugees and other communities in need, within available means, through a package of measures, which comprised employment programmes; cash and in kind assistance; food aid; reconstruction and repair of conflict-damaged shelters and infrastructure; emergency medical care; and psychological counselling and support. One of the main challenges facing UNRWA over the past four years was sustaining emergency assistance to over 1.1 million Palestinians while funding for emergency operations declined, and restrictions on humanitarian access threatened to undermine health, education and other essential services throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Since October 2000, UNRWA has raised some $520 million to support its programme of emergency humanitarian assistance.

UNRWA has set its regular budget for 2006 and 2007 at $489 million and $506 million respectively. If fully funded, the Agency will be able to implement its medium-term plan to improve services for refugees and their living conditions. UNRWA reported a projected deficit of $11.1 million for 2005. UNRWA staff undertook its tasks under dangerous circumstances. Since September 2000, 13 UNRWA staff members have been killed.

32. The Committee was appreciative of the work of the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In July, the Ministry of Planning of the Palestinian Authority and the Programme office agreed to coordinate the issuance of a Palestinian national poverty report. The Programme, together with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Planning, was also establishing a uniform system for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals and the progress made towards the "A world fit for children" declaration and the National Plan of Action for Palestinian Children in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Donor countries have continued to finance various projects, such as the rehabilitation of municipal structures; the restoration of the devastated agricultural sector; the paving of roads; the upgrading of the water supply; the construction of new schools and additional classrooms; and the protection of cultural and architectural heritage.

Chapter V
Action taken by the Committee

A. Action taken in accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/28

33. In pursuance of its mandate, the Committee continued to mobilize the international community in support of the Palestinian people, in cooperation with United Nations bodies, Governments, intergovernmental and civil society organizations and others, as indicated below.

1. Action taken in the General Assembly and the Security Council

34. On 11 November 2004, the General Assembly met to pay tribute to the memory of Yasser Arafat, late President of the Palestinian Authority. The Chairman of the Committee took part in the tribute and made a statement (A/59/PV.52).

35. During the period under review, the Security Council has continued to monitor the situation on the ground and the efforts to implement the road map. Throughout the year, the Council held monthly briefings under the agenda item entitled "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question".

36. The Security Council met on 4 October 2004, at the request of the Permanent Representative of Tunisia in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Arab States for the month of October (see S/2004/779). The Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Farhâdi, took part in the debate and made a statement (see S/PV.5049). At its 5051st meeting, on 5 October 2004, the Council voted on a draft resolution submitted by Algeria, Pakistan and Tunisia (S/2004/783). The result of the vote was 11 votes in favour, 1 against and 3 abstentions. The draft resolution was not adopted owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Council (see S/PV.5051).

37. The Security Council met on 21 July 2005, at the request of the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Kuwait in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Arab States for the month of July (see S/2005/469). The Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Badji, took part in the debate and made a statement (see S/PV.5230 (RESUMPTION1)).

2. Communications to the Secretary-General

38. The Chairman of the Committee has continued to bring the Committee's concerns about the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, to the attention of the Secretary-General (see A/ES-10/301-S/2005/262; A/ES-10/306-S/2005/556).

3. Statements by the Committee

39. On 11 November 2004, the Bureau of the Committee issued a statement concerning the passing of President Arafat (see GA/PAL/970).

40. On 30 August 2005, the Bureau of the Committee issued a statement concerning the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank (GA/PAL/990).

4. Participation by the Chairman of the Committee in international conferences and meetings

41. During the year, the Chairman of the Committee participated in events organized by civil society in support of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and contributed to their deliberations. The Chairman participated in the Peace in Palestine Conference, held from 28 to 30 March 2005 in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

42. As in previous years, the Committee continued to monitor the activities of other intergovernmental organizations relevant to the question of Palestine, as well as the decisions and resolutions adopted by United Nations bodies and agencies.

B. Action taken by the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 59/28 and 59/29

1. Programme of international meetings and conferences

43. In its programme of international meetings and conferences, the Committee addressed issues such as the application of international law to all aspects of the question of Palestine; the significance and impact of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice; the resumption of the political process and the implementation of the road map; the effects of the settlement policy and the construction of the wall on efforts to achieve a two-State solution; the need to protect the Palestinian people; and the further involvement of civil society.

44. In the period under review, the following international events were held under the auspices of the Committee:

(a) United Nations International Meeting on the Question of Palestine, United Nations Office at Geneva, 8 and 9 March 2005;

(b) Consultations with civil society, United Nations Office at Geneva, 10 March 2005;

(c) United Nations International Conference of Civil Society in Support of Middle East Peace, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 12 and 13 July 2005.

45. All of the above-mentioned events were attended by representatives of Governments, Palestine, intergovernmental and civil society organizations and United Nations system entities, as well as experts, representatives of the media, academics and students. The reports of the meetings were issued as publications of the Division for Palestinian Rights and were made available through the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL) and the Division's website.

2. Cooperation with intergovernmental organizations

46. During the year, the Committee continued its close cooperation with the African Union, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, through the participation of the Chairman in their meetings and through periodic consultations at United Nations Headquarters.

47. The Committee continued its cooperation on the question of Palestine with States members of the European Union. The Bureau held consultations with representatives of the European Union in March 2005 (under the Presidency of Luxembourg) as part of the ongoing effort to build a constructive relationship with European Union members on issues of common concern.

3. Cooperation with civil society

Civil society organizations

48. The Committee expanded its cooperation with non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, think tanks and media representatives through the International Civil Society Conference held at UNESCO headquarters, formal and informal consultations with civil society representatives, participation in meetings organized by non-governmental organizations and the accreditation of new organizations. It received briefs on the activities of civil society organizations in various parts of the world, including in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and in Israel, and expressed its appreciation for their useful work and commitment. It noted, in particular, the civil society initiatives against the construction of the wall that kept the focus of the general public on new facts on the ground brought about by the occupying Power. The Committee was deeply appreciative of the work done by many civil society organizations in providing emergency relief under the most difficult circumstances. It encouraged all of the organizations to continue their activities.

49. The Committee maintained and developed its liaison with the national, regional and international coordinating mechanisms accredited to it, in addition to its established liaison with a large number of individual non-governmental organizations. Representatives of civil society participated in all meetings organized under the auspices of the Committee, including the observance of the International Day of Solidarity on 29 November 2004. In the period under review, the Committee also accredited eight new non-governmental organizations. Consultations between the delegation of the Committee and representatives of civil society organizations accredited to the Committee were held at the United Nations office at Geneva on 10 March, following the United Nations International Meeting on the Question of Palestine. Participating representatives of non-governmental organizations provided information about their initiatives, campaigns and projects. The delegation of the Committee recommended to the representatives that their initiatives be based on international law, as set out in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, the Fourth Geneva Convention and on the resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly. The Chairman of the Committee met throughout the year with representatives of civil society organizations in New York and at the meetings organized under the auspices of the Committee away from Headquarters. The Chairman also participated in the Peace in Palestine Conference held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, on the initiative of a Malaysian umbrella organization that brings together over 400 non-governmental organizations from 35 countries, mainly from Asia and the Pacific.

50. The Division for Palestinian Rights maintained the Internet website "NGO Network on the Question of Palestine" as a permanent tool for mutual information and cooperation between civil society and the Committee. The website can be found at http://www.un.org/depts/dpa/ngo. The Division also continued to issue its

bimonthly newsletter, *NGO Action News*, covering the activities of civil society on the various aspects of the question of Palestine.

Parliaments and inter-parliamentary organizations

51. The Committee continued to develop its liaison with national and regional parliaments and their organizations and invited a number of parliamentarians to speak at its meetings. In Geneva in March 2005, the delegation of the Committee paid a visit to the headquarters of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and met with its Secretary-General, Anders Johnsson. The Chairman of the Committee commended the IPU efforts in support of the Palestinian people, in particular in promoting a dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian parliamentarians. The IPU Secretary-General informed the Committee delegation of efforts by the IPU to assist the Palestinian Authority in finalizing the electoral law and strengthening the oversight role of the Palestinian Legislative Council, its budget committees and its activities in the field of human rights. It remained crucial for the IPU to bring together members of the Knesset and the Council. It was agreed to continue and expand the involvement of parliamentarians of different backgrounds in the meetings organized under the auspices of the Committee.

4. Research, monitoring and publications

52. The Division carried out research and monitoring activities and responded to requests for information and briefings on the question of Palestine. Under the guidance of the Committee, which reiterated the relevance of the research, monitoring and publications programme, it also prepared the publications listed below for dissemination, including through UNISPAL:

(a) Monthly bulletin on action taken by United Nations and intergovernmental organizations in relation to the question of Palestine;

(b) Monthly chronology of developments relating to the question of Palestine, based on media reports and other sources;

(c) Reports of meetings organized under the auspices of the Committee;

(d) Special bulletins and notes on the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People;

(e) Periodic reviews of developments relating to Middle East peace efforts;

(f) Annual compilation of resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council relating to the question of Palestine.

5. United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine

53. The Division for Palestinian Rights, in cooperation with relevant technical and library services of the United Nations Secretariat, continued to administer, maintain, expand and develop UNISPAL, pursuant to successive annual General Assembly mandates. This included the ongoing upgrading of technical components of the system to ensure its uninterrupted presence on the Internet, notably via the UNISPAL "Question of Palestine" interface on the United Nations home page, under "Peace and Security", and involved the expansion of the documents collection to include relevant new and old documents. In addition, steps were continued to enhance the user-friendliness of accessing and navigating the system

(http://domino.un.org/unispal.nsf) — including to facilitate "bookmarking" of documents on the situation of Palestinian women — as work for the graphic enhancement of the "Question of Palestine" site progressed.

6. Training programme for staff of the Palestinian Authority

54. Three staff members from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Palestinian Authority participated in a training programme conducted by the Division, from September to December 2004, in conjunction with the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly. The trainees familiarized themselves with various aspects of the work of the Secretariat and other organs and conducted research on specific topics.

7. International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

55. The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was observed at Headquarters and at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna on 29 November 2004. On the occasion of the observance at Headquarters, in addition to a solemn meeting of the Committee and other activities, an exhibit entitled "Steadfast in Palestine" was presented by the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine under the auspices of the Committee. The Committee noted with appreciation that the International Day of Solidarity had also been observed in many cities throughout the world. Details on the observance are contained in the special bulletin issued by the Division.

56. In adopting its programme of work, the Committee decided that a similar observance of the International Day of Solidarity should be organized in 2005.

Chapter VI

Action taken by the Department of Public Information in accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/30

57. The Department of Public Information, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/30 of 1 December 2004, continued to implement its special information programme on the question of Palestine. It used various tools to disseminate information on the question of Palestine to the international community.

58. The Department's television, radio, press, photo and Internet news operations regularly covered the question of Palestine, providing live and archived coverage of open meetings of the General Assembly, the Security Council and other intergovernmental bodies on the issue. They also covered other programmes and activities in which the situation was addressed.

59. The Arabic Radio Unit produced a number of programmes covering the activities of UNRWA, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East, UNICEF, UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund and other United Nations agencies working in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Unit also conducted interviews with Palestinian participants in various intergovernmental meetings, including the 10-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing + 10) and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. A sequential series of radio programmes produced in the Territory were placed on a special page on the Arabic Radio Unit website. The question of Palestine was also regularly covered in all other official languages, as well as in non-official languages, such as Bahasa Indonesia, Bangla, Hindi, Turkish and Urdu.

60. The United Nations website continued to host a page on the question of Palestine under the "Global Issues" site, as well as the "Peace and Security" and "Refugees" pages. Links are available to the UNISPAL database, as well as to the web pages created by the Department of Political Affairs. In addition, the Website Section webcast all meetings of the Security Council and the General Assembly and most press conferences on the question of Palestine held at United Nations Headquarters, which were available immediately afterwards as archived webcasts.

61. The question of Palestine and a broad range of developments relating to the situation in the Middle East were given extensive coverage by the United Nations News Centre website in all official languages. The Arabic website continued to gain visitors over the past 12 months, receiving over 193,000 visits and registering 849,000 page views on various pages and files within the site. The news stories on these issues were also distributed throughout the world to some 40,000 subscribers to the e-mail service of the United Nations News Service in English and French. A special "News Focus" page on the news portal provided users with easy access to United Nations resources on the question of Palestine, including links to key reports, statements, resolutions and other related material.

62. During the period under review, the Department issued 149 press releases on the question of Palestine (77 in English, 72 in French). In addition, the completely updated 2004 edition of *Basic Facts about the United Nations* included an extensive section on the Middle East, in which all aspects of the Palestinian question were

addressed. The newly revised 2005 edition of the smaller booklet, *UN in Brief*, also highlighted United Nations efforts to promote a peaceful resolution of the situation through a two-State solution.

63. The Department held a two-week workshop for Arab journalists in November and December 2004, which included sessions on the question of Palestine.

64. As part of its special information programme on Palestine, the Department organized a training programme for 10 young Palestinian journalists at United Nations Headquarters, in Washington, D.C., and at the United Nations Office at Geneva, from 25 October to 10 December 2004. The programme was aimed at strengthening their capacity as media professionals.

65. In cooperation with the Foreign Ministry of Egypt, the Department organized an international media seminar on peace in the Middle East in Cairo, on 13 and 14 June 2005. The proceedings of the previous international media seminar, held in Beijing in June 2004, were published.

66. The permanent exhibit on Palestine at United Nations Headquarters (English) and at the Palais des Nations in Geneva (French) was updated in late 2004 and early 2005. A brochure accompanying the exhibit and entitled "The United Nations and the Question of Palestine" was published in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. The Graphic Design Unit of the Department of Public Information designed the brochure, as well as the booklet containing the proceedings of the Beijing media seminar.

67. The *UN Chronicle* (in the six official languages) and the *UN Chronicle Online* (in English and French) reported on events and issues relating to the question of Palestine and on action taken by the General Assembly. Articles were redistributed through *UN Chronicle* E-Alerts and the *UN Chronicle* Feature Service.

68. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library digitized documents pertaining to the United Nations Palestine Commission (A/AC.21 series) for UNISPAL document collections.

69. The network of United Nations information centres, services and offices continued to disseminate information on the question of Palestine and to organize special outreach activities. Press releases, statements, documents and audio-visual material were brought to the attention of target audiences, posted on their websites and made available to visitors of the reference libraries maintained by their relative offices.

70. A major focus of activities was the promotion of the International Day for Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The Department organized the installation of the annual exhibit on the question of Palestine at United Nations Headquarters during the observance of the Day. Special events and activities, including television and radio interviews, were organized by the centres, services and offices individually or jointly with United Nations associations and regional organizations, such as the League of Arab States. The Secretary-General's message for the Day was widely disseminated by the centres, particularly those in Accra, Brussels, Bucharest, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Dar es Salaam, Geneva, Lima, Mexico City, New Delhi, Pretoria, Rabat, Sana'a, Tehran, Tripoli, Tunis, Vienna and Warsaw.

Chapter VII
Conclusions and recommendations of the Committee

71. The year under review was marked by promise and hope, as well as by developments on the ground that complicated efforts to resume the peace process within the framework of the road map. The Committee is encouraged by the resumption of dialogue at the highest level between Israeli and Palestinian leaders. The Committee welcomes the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and four small settlements in the northern West Bank as a rare opportunity to revive negotiations within the framework of the road map and restart the stalled political process. It should be noted that Israel remains in control of the borders of the Gaza Strip, including its territorial sea and airspace and the movement of people and goods into and out of Gaza, thus hampering any meaningful economic development. The Committee is strongly opposed to the expansion of settlements in the West Bank and efforts to complete the construction of the wall on Palestinian land. It is particularly alarmed by the intention of the Israeli Government to expand large settlement blocks in the West Bank, which would separate East Jerusalem from the West Bank and the southern West Bank from its northern part. The Committee reiterates its position of principle that the settlements and the wall constructed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, are contrary to international humanitarian law and numerous resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, adopted since 1967, as well as the provisions of the road map.

72. The Committee has been encouraged by renewed efforts of the international community — in particular the Quartet, but also Egypt and Jordan — to revitalize the road map, facilitate the dialogue between the parties and implement their commitments under the road map. The Committee reiterates that the road map remains the best way to achieve the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine through the establishment of two States, Israel and Palestine, based on the 1967 borders. A settlement should be based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003) in particular, and other relevant resolutions. The Committee hopes that the Quartet and the international community will continue to work towards the achievement of this goal.

73. The Committee considers that its programme of international meetings and conferences contributes to focusing the attention of Governments, intergovernmental and civil society organizations and the general public on issues crucial for advancing a peaceful settlement of the conflict. The meetings highlight the most pressing concerns, such as the need to end violence, stop settlement activities and improve the living conditions of the Palestinian population. They contribute to raising international awareness of the root cause of the conflict, namely the occupation by Israel of the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. They also mobilize international support for efforts to resolve the conflict and implement the road map. The Committee is deeply appreciative of the involvement in those meetings of Governments, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations entities and civil society. It expresses its satisfaction with the level of dialogue, engagement and support

from the international community achieved at those meetings. It will continue the programme to foster support for the attainment by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights in accordance with international legitimacy. In its meetings programme for 2006, the Committee intends to address such issues as the need to end the occupation of all Palestinian land; support of the efforts by the Palestinian Authority to rehabilitate the economy, especially that of the Gaza Strip; the responsibility of all Governments to apply international law to all aspects of the question of Palestine, in accordance with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice; the implementation of the road map; the adverse consequences of the settlement policy and the construction of the wall for the achievement of a two-State solution; the need to protect the Palestinian people; the humanitarian and socio-economic situation, including the plight of Palestinian women and children; and the role of civil society.

74. The Committee commends civil society organizations for their efforts to uphold international legitimacy with regard to the question of Palestine through advocacy and the mobilization of public opinion and for their initiatives aimed at alleviating the plight of the Palestinian people. It notes the support it receives from the Secretariat in strengthening its cooperation with civil society. The Committee encourages civil society organizations to focus and synchronize their advocacy efforts at the local, national, regional and international levels on the legal obligations of Governments, as emphasized in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. It welcomes recent civil society initiatives, in particular in developing countries, to establish umbrella mechanisms to better coordinate their work. It supports all humanitarian and assistance initiatives geared towards improving the daily lives of the Palestinians. The Committee will also strive to enhance the involvement of parliamentarians in its programme of meetings and conferences.

75. The Committee emphasizes the essential contribution of the Division for Palestinian Rights in support of its mandate and the implementation of its programme of work. The Committee, therefore, requests the Division to continue its mandated activities, including substantive and secretariat support; the programme of research, monitoring and publications and other informational activities, such as the further expansion and development of UNISPAL, including the graphic enhancement of the "Question of Palestine" website; the annual training programme for staff of the Palestinian Authority; and the annual observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The Committee expects the Division to continue to promote international awareness of the question of Palestine, as well as support for the rights of the Palestinian people and a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine. In this regard, the Committee notes with satisfaction (a) the level of dialogue, engagement and support of the international community for its programme objectives, for instance, in terms of both participation at the meetings convened and use of printed and electronic information materials provided by the Division; (b) the number of civil society organizations that have received accreditation to the Committee; and (c) the number of pages viewed on the United Nations website on the question of Palestine. The Committee also considers that the annual training programme for the staff of the Palestinian Authority has proved its usefulness and requests that it be continued.

76. **The Committee is of the view that the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information has made an important contribution to informing the media and public opinion of the relevant issues. The Committee requests the programme's continuation, with the necessary flexibility, as warranted by developments relevant to the question of Palestine.**

77. **Wishing to make its contribution to the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine and in view of the many difficulties facing the Palestinian people and besetting the peace process, the Committee calls upon all States to join in this endeavour and invites the General Assembly again to recognize the importance of its role and to reconfirm its mandate with overwhelming support.**

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/31/35).

[2] Ibid., *Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/32/35); ibid., *Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 35* and corrigendum (A/33/35 and Corr.1); ibid., *Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 35* and corrigendum (A/34/35 and Corr.1); ibid., *Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/35/35); ibid., *Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/36/35); ibid., *Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 35* and corrigendum (A/37/35 and Corr.1); ibid., *Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/38/35); ibid., *Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/39/35); ibid., *Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/40/35); ibid., *Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/41/35); ibid., *Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/42/35); ibid., *Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/43/35); ibid., *Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/44/35); ibid., *Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/45/35); ibid., *Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/46/35); ibid., *Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/47/35); ibid., *Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/48/35); ibid., *Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/49/35); ibid., *Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/50/35); ibid., *Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/51/35); ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/52/35); ibid., *Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/53/35); ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/54/35); ibid., *Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/55/35); ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 35* and corrigendum (A/56/35 and Corr.1); ibid., *Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/57/35); ibid., *Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/58/35); and ibid., *Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 35* (A/59/35).

[3] A/AC.183/2005/CRP.1.

[4] The observers at the Committee meetings were as follows: Algeria, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, China, Ecuador, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Nicaragua, Niger, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Yemen, African Union, League of Arab States, Organization of the Islamic Conference and Palestine.

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